

Town of Oak Bluffs
Finance and Advisory Committee
Thursday, January 21, 2010, 3:30 PM
Oak Bluffs Library Conference Room

Present: Chair Mimi Davisson, Doug Best,
Bill McGrath, Mac Starks, Hans Von Stieger

Others:
Selectmen Kathy Burton,
Tax Collector – Cheryl Sashin
Highways - Richard Combra, Jr.
Library – Danguole Budris,
Tisb. FinCom: Melinda Loburg, John Snyder
Public: Karen Achille, Maura McGroarty,
Recorder - Marni Lipke*

Absent: Steve Auerbach, Frank Case,
Thad Harshbarger, Mike Perry

* Late arrivals or early departures,
noted solely to mark vote counts.

The meeting was called to order at 3:36PM. The agenda was reviewed and a report on trash pick options added.

OLD BUSINESS

• Approve past minutes (DECIDE)

The minutes were postponed.

• Review Results of January 14 Public Input Session (INFO SHARE)

The session was widely commended as an excellent start in opening communications with tax payers on the budget process. Points of interest to the FinCom included public reactions in regards to:

- life guards,
- an unwillingness to raise taxes/pass overrides,
- Highway Dept. current work and ongoing budgets.

The FinCom noted:

- the large turnout which was still a small percentage of town residents,
- public opinion that differed from the 12/4/09 Meeting of municipal leaders and the need for elected officials to stay in touch with their constituents,
- the costs and efficacy of continued advertising, public attendance, at FinCom meetings, and spreading the word.
- FinCom role to promote governmental and budget transparency,
- the John Boardman Letter to the Editor of the MV Times.
- the need to encourage more senior attendance (see below: Actions).

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• Review Current Year (FY2010) Financial Status (INFO SHARE)

The Fiscal Year 2010 (FY10) half-year report was discussed and a number of questions asked about: transfers, total spending percentage, the Town accountant office, and Administrative implementation of FinCom requests. (See below: Documents on File and Actions)

• Review First-Pass Budget for FY2011 (INFO SHARE / DECIDE)

The FY11 draft budget was reviewed and questions asked (s See below: Documents on File and Actions). The FinCom discussed:

- requesting a balance budget,
- zero-based budgets and restoration of FY10 cuts as returning to business as usual,
- FinCom responsibility to set guidelines,
- an override as a necessity to balancing the current draft,
- putting increases, especially lifeguards on overrides,
- requesting a 10 year list of overrides including what was being funded and what passed.

• Solid Waste Collection Options (See documents on file and below: Actions.)

Hans Von Steiger, Highway Dept. Head Richie Combra Jr. and Town Administrator Michael Dutton met on Solid Waste options and presented a proposal for a separate enterprise fund.

- Downtown / Harbor pickup – partially covered by Harbor fees – was estimated at \$90,000.
- With private contractors consumer prices rose over time to the detriment of the users.
- To cover all costs (including capital investments) each household would pay about \$125 annually or ~\$10/ mo. (discounted for seniors) into the fund, in addition to lower sticker prices.
- Curbside recycling would be slowly phased in.
- The Fin Com requested the team submit more options such as:
 - a private franchise with capped prices,
 - raising sticker prices to cover costs,
 - an enterprise fund supported by users only.

NEW BUSINESS

• Meet with Tisbury FinCom re Possible Areas for Inter-Municipal Cooperation (BRAINSTORM / DECIDE)

The OB FinCom welcomed John Snyder and Melinda Loburg, who explained they were not speaking for Tisbury or for the Tisbury FinCom; introductions were made all around. It seemed probable that any Islandwide collaboration would have to start on a town by town basis. A Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC) / Dukes County report on Town and Islandwide services would be completed shortly. Town departments were discussed in terms of being candidates for inter-municipal merging or collaboration.

- **Animal Control** – Tisbury was already collaborating with West Tisbury and animals did not honor Town boundaries.

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- Finance/Accounting - These out-of-sight departments were not strongly tied to Town identity. Duties could be centralized while maintaining separate.
 - First step – common Islandwide accounting and assessment software.
- Information/Technology - Also easily centralized with satellite bureaus. It would provide good career opportunities and critical mass to reduce rates and purchase prices.
- Town Clerks – should remain separate to each town.
- Conservation - Tisbury and Edgartown each hired half of one Conservation Agent – paying and reporting separately.
- Insurance - Policies were Town specific although there were some opportunities for collaboration with self-insurance.
- Police: OB/Tisbury negotiations to share a police chief were different from integrating police forces. A two town elected independent Police Commission was suggested.
- Fire and Ambulance – Regionalization would produce substantial capital costs savings.
 - Centralizing Emergency Medical / Ambulance service would also greatly benefit all Island patients. Although town identity was a factor, EMT's worked easily together and often in several towns. Oak Bluffs was likely to be a major stumbling block due to the Ambulance Reserve Fund as a revenue generator.
 - First step - formation of a Task Force.
- Emergency Management – could and should be centralized.
- Shellfish – Oak Bluffs shared large bodies of water with both Tisbury and Edgartown. Wardens worked closely together, but were also fairly territorial.
- Library – Despite each library being a town community center they were already strongly regionalized through both the CLAMS system and interlibrary agreements. Hours might be coordinated so there was always an open library somewhere on the Island.
 - OB Librarian Danguole Budris explained the State certification requirements for budget levels, material purchasing, hours of operation and staff levels.
- Senior Centers – were similarly Town centers serving all Island elders. Administrative staff might be centralized.
- Building Inspectors – could enter into reciprocal agreements.
- Boards of Health – Barnstable was commended as a dynamic model. As with the Ambulance/EMT service a central location with specialized technical staff and town satellites could save costs and serve patients well. The recent flu emergencies had increased inter-town cooperation.
- Trash – Tisbury already had curbside recycling and equipment it might share.
- Highway – As with Fire Departments collaboration on heavy equipment and storage could be a major source of savings.
- It was clear that this was a longer term process not likely to effect the FY11 budget. Many Islanders were interested in more regionalization to save costs, however political leadership and will were important factors in realizing the goal.
- The OB FinCom thanked the Tisbury FinCom members for their participation.

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• Plan Jan 28 and Feb 4 Meetings (DECIDE)

- As both the Chair and Vice Chair could not be present Doug Best would facilitate the next meetings.
- The FinCom requested written justification from all departments with 5% or more increases by January 28th for discussion at the February 4th meeting (see below: Actions and Notes for Michael Dutton). The FinCom discussed:
 - the budget schedule,
 - getting Town Financial information in a timely manner,
 - FinCom responsibilities and authority,
 - presenting the Selectmen with definite FinCom opinions.
- The Capital Program Committee reported they had not approved any projects for FY11.
 - Ambulance Chief John Rose asked to lease a building next to Fire Station for extra space (see below: Actions).
 - Emergency Management Director Peter Martell requested permission to apply for a grant to build a storage shed for emergency management equipment/supplies.

The End

The meeting adjourned at 5:50PM.

Action List:

- Mimi Davisson – cancel 1/28/10 Meeting
 - look out for MVC/County report on Town services.
- All – ask Dept.'s how they are working with other towns.
- Hans Von Stieger/Richie Combra Jr./Michael Dutton – report on other trash options.
- Doug Best – facilitate 2/4/10 Meeting.

• Notes for Michael Dutton

- negotiate Ambulance / Police cooperation on extra space.
- draft list of essential and non-essential services,

FY10 Budget:

- **Revenues:** What are the transfers in? Are they Wastewater fund etc?
 - Please give a full year FY10 income projection, along with the YTD actuals.
- **Expenditure:**
 - Why is the Police Lt.'s FY09 salary greater than the Police Chief's?
 - Based on having already spent 52.1% of the budget what are your projections for the remainder of FY10?

° including the \$150,000 having to be made up from the FY09 shortfall.

° Please submit FY09 / FY10 expenditure % comparisons by the month, both monthly and cumulative; for example

	FY09 Monthly	FY10 Monthly	FY09 Cumulative	FY10 Cumulative
July	12%	15%	12%	15%
August	15%	15%	27%	30%
September	9%	8%	36%	38%

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FY11 Budget

• **Submit to the FinCom by January 28th a written justification** (as if it were being presented for an override) **from each Dept. Head who requested a budget increase of 5% or over**, including but not limited to:

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| - Accountant | - Assessor | - Recreation |
| - Police | - Fire | - Unclassified Selectmen |
| - Emergency Management | - Highway | - Shellfish |
| | | - Board of Health. |

(Registrar and Fixed Payroll are exempted.)

- Possible public budget meeting on a Saturday at the OB Sr. Center.
- Explore putting the Residential Placement in Supt. Shared Services or OBS budget.

Ongoing Action List from previous meetings.

- All – please inform the Chair if you are unable to attend a meeting.
- Chair and Vice Chair
 - keep up timely communications with FinCom members and Town Government.
 - Inform the Selectmen in writing of all significant FinCom decisions.
- FinCom – Continue to emphasize \$2,000,000 Stabilization Fund goal.
- Inform Depts. - any item not in dept. budgets will not be recommended for free cash.
 - update Capital Improvement Plan regularly.
- Regular meetings with Bd. of Selectmen and Personnel Board.

February 4th Agenda:

- Minutes: 1/7/10, 1/14/10, 1/21/10
- Discussion on Dept. increase justifications for the FY11 Budget Draft
- Straw Poll / start to draft OB FinCom opinions on FY11 option/issues.
- Town restructuring update.

Future Agendas:

- Capital Program Com. Report (quarterly)
- Capital Program Com. Roles and Responsibilities
- New Website Report
- Ambulance Fund Report.
- Finance Dept. Reorganization

Documents on file:

- Agenda – 1/21/10
- Sign In Sheet – 1/21/10
- OB Year to Date – Revenue for 2010 (24 p.) 1/20/10
- OB Revenue for Fiscal 2010
- OB Next Year/Current Year Budget Analysis Fiscal 2011 Budget Worksheets (11 p.) 1/21/10
- Solid Waste Enterprise Fund Budget (2 p.)

• **These Minutes approved as amended by the Oak Bluffs FinCom 2/18/10.**